

# PART IV

## THE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

### INTRODUCTION

This section includes management actions for the trails. These are specific actions for individual trail segments and historic sites. These actions are those which the BLM will implement in the short term, prior to 1991. All of these actions are an extension of the Oregon/Mormon Trail General Management Policy.

The management measures are organized by individual trail segment in the order they would be encountered on an east/west migration. The individual trail segments are identified in Table 1, Part I.

### MANAGEMENT ACTIONS FOR TRAILS

The following management action is identified for each site.

#### Torrington to Independence Rock -TIR (Casper/Rawlins Districts)

##### Management of Sites

**Site TIR-3 Bessemer Bend.** The existing facilities at this crossing of the North Platte River will be retained. The site was established in 1976 for the Bicentennial. Management actions include public access, designated parking, interpretive panels, vault toilets, and garbage service. Additional facilities will include a picnic ramada, picnic tables, planting of shade trees, and the acquisition of two acres adjacent to the site.

**Site TIR-4 Emigrant Gap.** Emigrant Gap is a shallow pass through the ridge now called Emigrant" Gap Ridge. A historical marker will be installed at the site. A designated parking area and interpretive panel will be developed to facilitate public use and enjoyment of the site.

##### Management of Trail Segments

The Platte River Resource Area Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS) sets forth land use management decisions for the Oregon/Mormon Trail Resource Management Unit (RMU). Management in this unit will be directed primarily toward protection of the character of significant remnants of historic trail segments. Interpretation and ORV use would be managed for enhancement of the cultural resources. The trail segments will be protected from surface development and ORV use. Any additional trail segments that may be located will be protected on the basis of an evaluation of their significance. The following specific management actions are based on the Platte River RMP/EIS.

**Site TIR-1 Fort Laramie A.** The site, an excellent example of Oregon Trail ruts, could be managed by the National Park Service under a cooperative management agreement (CMA). If such a CMA were entered into, appropriate development would include a parking area, a footpath to the trail ruts, signing and interpretive panels. In the absence of a CMA, development of the site would be limited to signing. Another option, which will be considered, would be to transfer this site and the following one -TIR-2 to the National Park Service. The ruts themselves will remain closed to ORV use and the site will be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

**Site TIR-2 Fort Laramie B.** Public access will be provided to the site. It will remain closed to ORV use. Directional signing will be provided along with interpretive signing at the ruts themselves. The site will be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. **Site TIR-5 Horse Creek.** Public access will be maintained. Directional and interpretive signing will be installed at the site. ORV use will be limited to existing roads and vehicle routes at the site.

**Site TIR-6 Old Bedlam Segment.** At present, public access exists to the site. It will remain closed to ORV use. A designated parking area will be developed along with directional signing and interpretive panels. A foot trail to the wagon ruts

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will be included in development plans. The site will be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

**Site CR-1 Platte Island Trail Segment.** Public access presently exists to the site and it is closed to ORV use. These measures will be retained. In addition to those management actions, the site will have a historic marker and interpretive sign installed. The site will be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

**Site TIR-7 Sergeant Custard Segment.** The site will remain closed to ORV use. A historic marker will be installed and the site will be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

**Site TIR-8 Glade Draw Segment.** The existing ORV closure will be maintained. Public access will be maintained to the site. Future management actions include placing a historic marker and interpretive sign at the site. The site will be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

**Site TIR-9 Ryan Hill Segment.** A hill (Prospect Hill) requiring a significant climb with a grade averaging 7.5 percent. A landmark popularized by Mormons in William Clayton's *Latter Day Saints Emigrants' Guide*. Other recreational developments will include a designated parking area, interpretive panels, a scenic overlook, and a foot trail to the trail ruts. The site will be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

### Sweetwater/South Pass Segment -SS (Rawlins/Rock Springs Districts)

This segment consists of the primary route of the Oregon/Mormon National Historic Trails. It begins at Independence Rock in the Rawlins District (Sec. 9, T. 29 N., R. 86 W.) and ends at the Little Sandy River crossing in the Rock Springs District (Sec. 28, T. 26 N., R. 105 W.). The route generally follows the Sweetwater River from Independence Rock to South Pass, passing such major historic sites as Devil's Gate, Martins Cove, Split Rock, Ice Slough, and Burnt Ranch. It then heads southwest from South Pass to the crossing of Little Sandy Creek, the end of this segment.

#### Management of Sites

**Site SS-1 Devil's Gate.** Devil's Gate, a prominent landmark north of the trails on the Sun Ranch, was formed by a precipitous canyon through which the Sweetwater River flows. It was described in many emigrants' journals. The site is presently a national

historic landmark. The existing mineral withdrawal will be retained. Devil's Gate will be managed to maintain its present natural appearance. This means that activities that would significantly disturb the area will not be allowed. The site will be managed to protect and ensure the continuation of existing uses, in addition to the scenic value. Retain Devil's Gate on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Site SS-2 Devil's Gate Historic Site.** This BLM-managed roadside interpretive site interprets the site from the fur trade era through the 1860s. It was established in 1976 for the Bicentennial. Devil's Gate interpretive site will be managed to interpret the Sweetwater Valley at Devil's Gate. Topics include Devil's Gate, the fur trade, the emigrant trails (Oregon, Mormon, and California), the Pony Express Route, military forts, telegraph line, and early ranching in the area. The site will be withdrawn from mineral entry. No developed facilities except the existing paved parking lot, paved trail, fence, signs, trash cans and interpretive panels will be maintained at the site. Permaloy interpretive panels will be considered for future replacement of existing panels at the site. The Martins Cove National Register Plaque and interpretive sign will be displayed at the Devil's Gate interpretive site.

**Site SS-3 Martins Cove.** Martins Cove is a protected pocket on the southern flank of the Sweetwater Rocks. Captain Edward Martin's Mormon Handcart emigrants took refuge from a winter storm in November 1856, where 135 to 150 persons died of exposure. Interpretation of the Martins Cove site will be included at the existing Devil's Gate Historic Site. The BLM does not anticipate attempting to acquire access across the private lands to the site. The BLM will seek a mineral withdrawal for the site and manage it to protect the natural and scenic features. Surface-disturbing activities will not be authorized. Only the minimum area necessary to protect the site will be affected (600 acres -the area covered by the National Register site). The site will be retained on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Site SS-4 Astorian Camp.** The precise location of this site is not known. The Astorian campsite will be interpreted at the adjacent Devil's Gate Historic Site.

**Site SS-5 Split Rock.** Split Rock is a highly visible Landmark which covers roughly one square mile and consists of a cleft in solid granite. It was used by travelers to mark the route along the Sweetwater River. The existing mineral withdrawal will be retained. The BLM will manage Split Rock to preserve its natural scenic features. No surface-

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disturbing activities will be authorized. The site is currently part of a BLM Wilderness Study Area (WSA). No development is recommended for the site. This site will remain on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Site SS-6 Split Rock Pony Express Station.** This historical way station is in the viewshed of the Split Rock interpretive site and immediately adjacent to the Oregon/Mormon Trails. The BLM will maintain the natural appearance of the site. To do this, surface-disturbing activities at the site will not be authorized. Rights-of-way, for example, will be required to pass south of Cranner Rock rather than north of the rock along the Sweetwater River. The site will be evaluated to determine if it should be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

**Site SS-7 Split Rock Interpretive Site.** A BLM-managed interpretive site adjacent to Highway 287. Built as a Bicentennial project. Interprets trails, Pony Express, military post, and telegraph line. The site will interpret the Oregon and Mormon Pioneer National Historic trails. It will also provide limited picnic facilities, vault toilets, and garbage service. The site will be withdrawn from mineral entry. The Split Rock site will interpret adjacent historic sites on the trails such as stage stations, military posts, and other features along the trails. The "Three Crossings" site, for example, will be interpreted at the existing Split Rock sites rather than developing a new site. Permaloy interpretive panels will be considered for future replacement of existing panels at the site.

**Site SS-8 Three Crossings.** A geographic landmark and difficult obstacle where the emigrants had to cross the Sweetwater River three times in two miles. Scene of a garrison site for the 6th and 11th Ohio Cavalry as well as Pony Express and Overland Trail Stage stations. This site involves predominantly private and state lands, and no facilities are presently in place. Public access to this site is not available and most of the site lies on private land, including the actual crossings, station, and historic site. Interpretive potential on public land is limited. Due to these constraints, no management actions are planned by the BLM at this time.

**Site SS-9 Ice Slough.** This site is a marsh occupying a small valley on both BLM and private lands. Prior to being physically drained, water collected beneath the turf and froze. The heavy insulating layer kept the ice frozen until summer when it was used by emigrants as a welcome refreshment. The existing facilities consist of a roadside turnout and state historical marker on the north side of the highway. This facility, although minimal, adequately interprets the site on public land. The largely undeveloped setting of ice slough offers the highway visitor an opportunity to appreciate and experience the wide open spaces of the trail as it was in historic times. The public lands should be retained under BLM management and the site should be considered for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

**Site 55-10 Seminole Cutoff Parting.** The only notable feature is the fact that the primary trail and the Seminole Cutoff diverged at this point. The BLM will install a small interpretive sign, identifying the site as the Seminole Cutoff Parting.

**Site 55-11 Rocky Ridges.** Limited interpretive signs of a non-obscuring character should be placed at Rocky Ridges. This site is approximately a four square mile area over which the emigrants toiled up steep hills along the trail on the north side of the Sweetwater River. Low profile, interpretive signs should be placed near the crest of the ridge where iron rust marks from pioneer wagon wheels are still visible on the rock outcrops. This would enhance appreciation of the site by parties traveling over the trail but would not detract from the significant, natural character of the area. The area will continue to have a limited ORV designation -vehicle travel is limited to existing roads and vehicle routes. The site will be considered for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

**Site 55-12 Oregon Trail Withdrawals.** These withdrawals will be maintained to protect natural values of the area and sites related to pioneer exploration and emigration. The withdrawal should be expanded to include the NWNE Sec. 27, SV2 Sec. 22, T. 29 N., R. 97 W. The purpose of the withdrawal is to limit surface uses which would disturb natural and scenic values of the area near the Oregon/Mormon Trails.

### Sixth Principal Meridian

T. 29 N. R. 87 W.,  
sec. 25, SV2SV2;  
sec. 26, SEV4;  
sec. 35, N1/2NE1/4.

T. 29 N., R. 89 W.,  
sec. 13, SW1/4, S1/2N1/2;  
sec. 18, Lots 6, 7, E1/2SE1/4, SE1/4;  
sec. 19, Lots 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, NE1/4SW1/4.

T. 29 N., R. 97 W.,  
sec. 22, SW1/4SW1/4;  
sec. 27, NW1/4, SW1/4E1/4;  
sec. 28, N1/2;  
sec. 34, SE1/4, E1/2SW1/4, SW1/4SW1/4.

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T. 27 N., R. 101 W.,  
sec. 4, SW1/4, S1/2NW1/4;  
sec. 5, SE1/4, S1/2NE1/4.

The subject lands were withdrawn for protection of segments of the historic Oregon Trail corridor and associated landmarks. The lands are presently used for grazing, recreation, and wildlife habitat. The mineral report for the subject lands shows the lands are not known to contain locatable minerals of more than nominal value, although numerous mining claims have been filed on these lands.

**Site SS-13 Radium Springs (Gillispie Place).** Radium Springs was utilized by Oregon and Mormon Trail emigrants, the Pony Express, and miners from the Lewiston mining district. The buildings will be fenced to protect them from cattle and vandalism (FY85). A rustic designed interpretive sign will be placed at the site to inform visitors about its history (FY85). The structures will be stabilized to prevent further deterioration. The site should be evaluated for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

**Site SS-14 Willie's Handcart Disaster Site.** Willie's Handcart Company was a group of Mormons bound for Utah who got caught in a severe storm in November 1856. They were trapped on Rock Creek and, before their rescue, 77 Mormons died. The majority of the site is on private land. The portion on public land should be maintained in a natural condition and managed as an important historic site. Surface disturbance will not be allowed. Existing mining claims will be honored and managed under 43 CFR 3809, Surface Management. Undeveloped group camping will continue to be a major use of this sheltered Rock Creek Cove.

**Site SS-15 Burnt Ranch (private land).** Burnt Ranch is the site of the ninth crossing of the Sweetwater, where the Seminoe Cutoff rejoined the original trail. Burnt Ranch is also the site of the beginning of the Lander Cutoff. The BLM would continue to negotiate acquisition of the private lands at Burnt Ranch through purchase or exchange. Attempts have been made to acquire the property by those means in the past without success. The landowner has expressed a willingness to negotiate on the sale of the property and is in favor of protecting its historic value. The lands that should be acquired are in Secs. 23, 24, 25, and 26, T. 28 N., R. 100 W. The most important lands to acquire are the SW1/4SE1/4 Sec. 23 and the NE1/4, NE1/4SE1/4 Sec. 26, T. 28 N., R. 100 W. (240 acres). This action would place in public ownership lands that were used as:

part of a fur trade route; a military garrison post; a telegraph station;  
the ninth crossing of the Sweetwater on the Oregon Trail;  
a Mormon mail station and camp site; a stage stop;  
the Junction of the Oregon Trail and the Lander Road/Seminoe Cutoff;  
a historic ranch;  
an emigrant campsite;  
a site for numerous emigrant graves;  
the Point-of-Rocks/South Pass stage; or a road crossing of the Sweetwater.

This proposed land acquisition will be handled on a willing buyer/willing seller basis. No condemnation actions will be utilized to meet BLM management objectives for the Oregon/Mormon Trails. In the event that it proves impossible to acquire the above private lands, the BLM will seek to acquire a scenic/conservation easement for the 240 acres described above. The purpose of this action will be to preserve the historic values of the site and provide some compensation for the owner.

If acquired, the lands would be managed to minimize surface disturbance and damage to the historic properties.

Recreational development would not be undertaken. No campgrounds or other facilities for the convenience of visitors would be developed. No improvement of access would be attempted.

Interpretive signing would be installed to inform visitors of the historic value of the site. The subjects to be included in the interpretive display are listed above.

Burnt Ranch would be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places and not be made available for mineral leasing (if the BLM is able to acquire both the surface and mineral estate), rights-of-way, or other activities that would cause surface disturbance. Patrol of the site would be performed periodically to deter vandalism and monitor site condition.

**Site 55-16 Twin Mounds.** The Twin Mounds are low hills located east of the Continental Divide at South Pass; a minor Oregon Trail landmark. Numerous travelers thought them to be South Pass. A small sign will be placed adjacent to the trail ruts to identify the Twin Mounds.

**Site 55-17 South Pass.** South Pass is the point where the Oregon/Mormon Pioneer Trails crossed the Continental Divide. The site will be retained

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under BLM management. This site will be managed as it presently exists, a simple minimally developed interpretive site. The fencing will be maintained as it presently exists. No attempts will be made to advertise the site as excessive use and vehicle traffic could result in vandalism of the two existing stone monuments. The site is currently on the National Register of Historic Places as a national historic landmark. This designation will be retained.

Interpretation of South Pass will be done at the roadside exhibit (Site SS-20).

**Site SS-18 Oregon Buttes.** Manage the Oregon Buttes as a scenic background for the Oregon Trail. A small sign identifying the Oregon Buttes will be placed adjacent to the trail and at the South Pass (SS-17) site. Oregon Buttes should be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

**Site SS-19 Pacific Springs (private land).** Pacific Springs, located in a valley west of South Pass was the first good water source west of the pass. The site was used as a campsite by emigrants. Buildings and other structures at the site are abandoned. The BLM will contact the owner of the private lands concerning an access agreement/ easement on the trails through this parcel of private land. If the landowner shows no interest in such a proposal, it will not be pursued.

In the event the BLM does acquire access through the Pacific Springs site, either through purchase of an easement or through cooperative agreement, measures will be taken by the BLM to protect and stabilize the historic structures at the site.

A sign identifying the site should be placed on public lands NW1/4NE1/4NW1/4 Sec. 12, T. 27 N., R. 102 W.

**Site SS-20 South Pass Exhibit.** This site will be managed as a roadside interpretive site for the Oregon, Mormon, and Pony Express Trails. Existing signs will be repaired and/or replaced. Annual maintenance will include repair of facilities, as needed, and garbage pickup. Sites to be interpreted include Pacific Springs, South Pass, Oregon Buttes, the trail itself, and other surrounding physical landmarks.

**Site SS-21 Pioneer Grave.** The site will be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities.

**Site SS-22 Plume Rocks.** Plume Rocks, a minor trail landmark, are low clay bluffs east of Dry Sandy Crossing. A small sign will be placed adjacent to the Oregon/Mormon Trails to identify Plume Rocks.

**Site 55-23 Dry Sandy Crossing (private land).** The Dry Sandy Crossing was the first stream crossing west of Pacific Springs. This stream was a source of brackish water. The site is on private land with peripheral areas on public land. The BLM will pursue acquisition through exchange of 40 acres of private land at the Dry Sandy Crossing. The legal description of the subject land is NE1/4NE1/4 Sec. 29, T. 27 N., R. 103 W. This is the only parcel of private land between Pacific Springs and the Little Sandy. The parcel contains hand-dug emigrant wells and the remains of the stage and Pony Express station.

In the event that the private lands are not acquired, interpretive signing could be installed on adjacent BLM-administered lands located in the SE1/4SE1/4SE1/4 Sec. 20, T. 27 N., R. 103 W. A second option for management of the site would be the purchase of an easement through the private parcel along the trail. This would also satisfy the need for access and interpretive facilities at the site.

The Dry Sandy site should be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. Interpretive signing should be installed. The signs would interpret the site's significance in terms of the Oregon, Mormon, and Pony Express Trails. The signs should mention the hand-dug wells, the Mormon pioneer party campsite, the Pony Express/stage station, and the nearby landmark of Plume Rocks.

**Site 55-24 Parting-of-the-Ways.** This site marks the beginning of the Sublette Cutoff, a route that cut 50 miles off the route to Oregon, bypassing Fort Bridger. Low profile, interpretive signing should be installed at the site. It should interpret the significance of the Sublette Cutoff as an alternate to the main route and Parting-of-the- Ways as a place of decision. It is currently on the National Register of Historic Places. That listing should be continued.

**Site 55-25 Little Sandy Crossing.** The Little Sandy Crossing provided a good source of water on the road to Fort Bridger. Used as a campsite by most travelers on the trail, there are numerous emigrant graves located at this site. An access agreement should be negotiated or an easement should be obtained through the parcel of private land at the point where the trail crossed the Little Sandy. As the situation now exists, one may travel from Dry Sandy to Little Sandy on public land but one cannot cross the Little Sandy to the County Road without crossing .5 mile of private land (W1/2 Sec. 28, T. 26 N., R. 105 W.). Acquisition of an easement or cooperative access agreement would ensure public access along this segment of trail.

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Interpretive signing should be installed on public lands (EV2 Sec. 28, T. 26 N., R. 105 W.) adjacent to the site. It should interpret the significance of the site to the Oregon/Mormon Trails and other historic uses, including the June 28, 1847 Mormon pioneer party campsite and meeting with Jim Bridger.

### Management of Trail Segments

**Segment 1, East of Devil's Gate.** Close the trail ruts in the following sections to all off-road vehicle use (Secs. 29 and 30, T. 29 N., R. 86 W.).

**Segment 2, Jackson Lake to Split Rock.** Public access to this segment is available except for .5 mile. The BLM will seek access through easement acquisition through the following private lands: NW1/4NW1/4 Sec. 27, NE1/4NE1/4 Sec. 28, T. 29 N., R. 89 W. This easement will open a 12- mile segment of the trails to use which cannot, at present, be traversed without trespassing on private lands.

If the private landowner is not interested in granting an easement across his property, the proposal will be dropped.

If the easement were obtained, it would not be advertised by highway signs. It would be shown in the proposed Oregon/Mormon Trail brochure which will be published to inform interested persons of the opportunities and limitations connected with trail use.

**Segment 3, Dry Sandy Swales.** An informational sign will be erected at the point where the modern vehicle track crosses the "Dry Sandy Swales" of the trail. These are the most impressive of any deep ruts on the Oregon Trail. The sign would inform visitors that this enormous groove in the face of the land was worn by thousands of westward trekking Americans. The Swales are located in Secs. 29 and 30, T. 27 N., R. 103 W.

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All other management of the trail segments is outlined in the Oregon/Mormon Trail General Management Policy. The Sweetwater/South Pass segment of the Oregon/Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trails is considered to be the highest priority segment for funding, development, and management.

### Lombard Ferry Segment - LF (Rock Springs District)

This segment consists of the Oregon/Mormon Pioneer Trails, the California Trail, and the Pony Express route. It begins at the Little Sandy Crossing (Sec. 29, T. 26 N., R. 105 W.) and continues to Fort Bridger, Wyoming (Sec. 33, T. 16 N., R. 115 W.). It crosses the Green River at Lombard Ferry (Sec. 8, T. 22 N., R. 109 W.) and Palmer Ferry (Sec. 16, T. 21 N., R. 109 W.).

The trail crosses mostly private land through the Eden Valley. It nearly parallels the Farson-Fontenelle highway on public lands to Lombard Ferry and Palmer Ferry. From the Green River, the route traverses a checkerboard land owner- ship area to the Bridger Valley. It crosses the Hams Fork at Granger and follows the Blacks Fork through the Bridger Valley on private lands to Fort Bridger.

### Management of Sites

**Site LF-1 Simpson's Hollow (Simpson's Gulch).** Mormon raiders, under Lot Smith, captured a train of 23 wagons loaded with supplies for General Albert S. Johnston's army, then advancing on Utah. The wagons and all their contents were burned at this site. One of several noted events of the Mormon War.

Simpson's Hollow will be identified with a BLM sign at the point where it is crossed by the trail. The site should be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

**Site LF-2 Simpson's Gulch Interpretive Turnout.** An interpretive sign should be erected at the proposed turnout. The sign will describe the Mormon War wagon train burning. Nearby emigrant campsites and gravesites will also be mentioned (see Site LF-1).

### Site LF-3 Oregon Trail Interpretive Site.

Interpretive and visitor facilities should be developed at this site. The turnout was recently completed by the Wyoming Highway Department. A low profile, interpretive sign should be erected adjacent to the parking area closest to the trail ruts. The sign should interpret the historical significance of all features related to the Oregon! Mormon and Pony Express Trails located between Simpson's Gulch and the Green River. This would include:

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Palmer Ferry Alternate of the Oregon Trail;  
Military telegraph line;  
The Kinney Cutoff;  
The Baker-Davis Road;  
The June 30 to July 2, 1847 Mormon Pioneer Party campsite;  
The Big Timber Pony Express station; and  
The main emigrant campsite northwest of Gasson Bridge

**Site LF-4 Big Timber Station.** A trading post at the junction of the Oregon/Mormon Trails and the Kinney-Slate Creek Cutoff. Field investigations will be conducted to precisely locate the site. Field data will be reviewed to determine the eligibility of this site for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

**Site LF-5 Lombard Ferry.** Lombard Ferry was the site of a ferry across the Green River. Public lands are adjacent to the river on either side. A roadside interpretive sign should be placed in the SEY4 of Sec. 18, T. 22 N., R. 109 W. on BLM-administered land. The sign will interpret nearby Lombard Ferry and other nearby important historic sites. Examples include:

Oregon Trail fords and ferries;  
Mormon Ferry;  
Campsite of the 1847 Mormon Pioneer Party;  
Green River Pony Express station; and  
Original location of Jim Bridger's trading post.

**Site LF-6 Martin's Station (Pony Express).** Field investigations will be conducted to precisely locate the site. Field data will be reviewed to determine the eligibility of this site for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

### Management of Trail Segments

This segment of trail, from the crossing of the Little Sandy to Fort Bridger, crosses a variety of land ownership patterns -mostly private to mostly public. From Farson to Interstate 80, most of the trail may be traveled, either on the trail itself or on adjacent improved roads and highways.

The BLM will not implement management measures that specifically encourage travel on the trail itself such as directional signing. The trail remains on public lands will not be closed to CRV use.

The BLM will not attempt to acquire easements or cooperative agreements in this segment.

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The Oregon/Mormon Trail Management Policy included elsewhere in this plan applies to this segment. It is anticipated that a number of management actions may be carried out in the future. Annual surveillance and monitoring of use is scheduled; ORV designations may be made. A protective corridor may be established or other measures outlined in the Oregon/Mormon Trail Management Policy. They include possible nomination of certain segments of the trail to the National Register of Historic Places. These would be determined, based on future field work.

### Bridger Segment -BR (Rock Springs District)

From Fort Bridger, the Oregon Trail courses generally northwest over Bigelow Bench. From this bench, the trail turns generally north and drops down into the Big Muddy Creek drainage. Some excellent ruts are located on the Trail approaches the Carter Cedars. As the Trail passes the Carter Cedars, the Trail swings west then north and enters the Little Muddy Creek drainage. Upon approaching the Little Muddy, the Oregon Trail turns west to follow the south side of the drainage. The Black's Fork Cutoff meets the Oregon Trail here, but is found on the north side of the Creek. Fort Bridger lies 17 miles southeast of this point.

The Oregon Trail follows the Little Muddy Creek for about five miles and passes through Cumberland Gap, a local landmark formed where the Little Muddy cuts a pass through Oyster Ridge. West of Cumberland Gap, the Oregon Trail splits into several segments while crossing Cumberland Flats. A mile-long segment of the Oregon Trail in this area contains pristine trail evidence, consisting of undisturbed ruts, swales, rust-stained rock, and historic artifacts all in a generally unspoiled setting. Six to seven miles west of Cumberland Gap, these segments unite to follow either the east or north side of the Little Muddy, as it ascends towards the Bear River Divide.

Except for four miles north of I-80, this segment is located entirely within the checkerboard land ownership area. This segment contains approximately 18 miles of trail on public lands.

### Management of Sites

There are no historic sites of note on public lands along this segment. The BLM will pursue acquisition of the Ziller Ranch, just east of Cumberland Gap on the Oregon Trail. It is not known if the present landowner would be receptive to the idea of an exchange or sale.

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The possibility will be pursued. Management measures will not be developed for this site unless such an exchange or purchase was completed.

### Management of Trail Segments:

The trail will be managed under the Oregon/ Mormon Trail General Management Policy. No other specific actions are identified at this time. An example of the application of the General Management Policy is the use of the National Register of Historic Places as a management tool. Along this trail segment, as well as others in the network of trails in this plan, there may be sites or sections of trail ruts that, from time to time, are nominated or found eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Oregon Trail ruts in the vicinity of the Carter Cedars is an example that may be evaluated for possible inclusion on the National Register. Vehicle use of this segment will be authorized, although specific management measures to encourage such use will not be implemented.

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No specific policy for this trail segment is needed.

### Bear River Divide Segment -B D (Rock Springs District)

The Bear River Divide segment of the Oregon Trail is one of the more difficult segments to describe in that there appears to have been several segments, routes, and variants allowing wagon passage over this divide. At present, the main route of the Oregon Trail is recognized as abandoning the Little Muddy and ascending first Chicken Creek, then present day Road Hollow Creek. After cresting the Bear River Divide, the trail goes west past Sand Knoll and drops down to North Bridger Creek. Two miles later, North Bridger Creek unites with Bridger Creek and the trail follows the north and east side of this creek as it courses northwest towards the Bear River Valley.

Other Oregon Trail variants east of the Bear River Divide include:

1. A variant that follows the headwaters of Chicken Creek directly to Bridger Creek;
2. An alternate route that follows the Little Muddy Creek to the Bear River Divide; and
3. A possible variant that leaves the Little Muddy Creek variant and runs along Fossil Ridge - really a three-mile long switchback -that unites with the main trail .5 mile north of Cercocapia Reservoir.

Several variants are found on the western side of the Bear River Divide:

1. A poorly understood trail segment associated with the headwaters of Spring Creek;
2. Two trail segments located near the head of Bridger Creek. These routes are the western extension of the Chicken Creek Trail and contain well-preserved trail ruts;
3. Three short (1 to 1.5 miles in length) alternates descending the Divide near Cercocapia Reservoir that lead to the North Bridger Creek Main Trail;
4. A variant branching off the Main Trail north of Sand Knoll that follows an unnamed creek for five miles north of, and then uniting with the Bridger Creek Main Route near where the creek enters the Bear River Valley; and
5. Finally, a possible variant, largely deviating from those routes described above, merits discussion. Reference to this variant is found in the *Oregon Trail Cultural Resource Study* prepared by the Idaho State Historical Society (1981, p. 277, 280). The route leaves the main trail about two miles east of Sand Knoll and runs north for about seven miles along the eastern uplands of Collette Creek. This route then crosses Twin Creek and appears somewhat obliterated for about 1.5 miles, until 1 mile south of Gooseberry Spring. Here, the route divides and runs east and west of a large hill and reunites again near the headwaters of Antelope Creek. The trail then follows the north side of Antelope Creek for four miles and connects with the main Oregon Trail northeast of the present-day community of Beckwith.

In the Bear River Valley proper, roughly from west of Eli Hill northwards for about 25 miles to Cokeville, the Oregon Trail parallels present-day US Highway 89/30 along the east side of the Bear River. North of Cokeville, the trail continues its northward passage through The Narrows. Beyond this point, one Oregon Trail variant continues along US Highway 30/ 89 to Border Junction, where it turns west and leaves the state in the south end of the Thomas Fork Valley. Another variant is identified as crossing the Bear River just east of Anderson Hill where the trail picks up the Union Pacific Railroad R/W and exits the state south of the Bear River.



# Management Program

## Management of Sites

No known historic sites of note are found along these segments on public lands managed by the BLM.

## Management of Trail Segments

An interpretive sign is planned for the Oregon Trail west of Cumberland Gap, up Little Muddy Creek. This sign shall describe the difficult ascent up and over the Bear River Divide and indicate the route of the trail in the area. Another interpretive sign is planned for the Bear River Divide road where the trail crests the high ridge. This interpretive sign shall be more extensive in nature, as a panoramic view is attained in various locales. A small parking turnout should also be planned, as vehicle traffic does occur on the Bear River Divide Road. Many trail segments are only accessible by foot off of the ridge as the steepness of the terrain precludes vehicle use. A final interpretive sign (exact location presently undetermined) should be planned for the Oregon Trail north of Cokeville, explaining trail passage in the Bear River Valley.

There is much to be learned about the route alternatives in the Bear River Divide area. During the 1985 field season, Exxon conducted a survey of all possible trail remains. Their work included a literature search as well as field work. The objective was to identify important trail alternatives and others with little or no importance. Trail routes that can be verified and which have physical remains will receive protective management. Others not found to either be important or which have no physical remains will not be protected.

Oil and gas development will continue in the Bear River Divide area and will, no doubt, continue to affect the trails.

The Bear River Divide trail segments from the Little Muddy Creek to Highway 89 are recommended for 4-wheel drive vehicles or foot and horseback travel.

The BLM will attempt to acquire a public easement along the trail from Cumberland Gap to the beginning of the Bear River Divide segment in Sec. 3, T. 19 N., R. 118 W. Easements will also be acquired across state lands in Secs. 16 and 36, T. 20 N., R. 119 W., Secs. 5, 8, 9, and 16, T. 20 N., R. 120 W., and Secs. 26 and 35, T. 21 N., R. 120 W. This would make available a public travel way from the Idaho State line to Cumberland Gap north of Fort Bridger. The travel way will follow the primary route of the Oregon Trail.

Field studies and archival research will be conducted to determine the location and importance of the numerous trail remnants in this segment of the Oregon Trail. This work will help the BLM identify appropriate management measures and the degree of protection these segments should receive.

The Bear River Divide segment is a designated National Historic Trail Segment, located largely on public lands between Little Muddy Creek and Highway 89. This area should receive routine monitoring by resource area personnel. Problems resulting from use of the area should be dealt with quickly.

The portion of the segment from Little Muddy Creek to Highway 89 should be placed in a protective corridor as per the Oregon/Mormon Trail General Management Policy.

The area should receive an ORV designation of limited; motor vehicle use should be limited to existing roads and vehicle routes.

## Management Policy

Development of a specific policy for management of this segment is not necessary. This segment will be managed under the Oregon/Mormon Trail General Management Policy.

## Mormon/California Trail Segment -MC (Rock Springs District)

From Fort Bridger, the Mormon Trail is identified as a 2-track that passes just south of Bridger Butte. At Bridger Butte, the Trail divides into two segments, a northern route and a southern route. These routes reunite east of Aspen Mountain, and will be discussed separately. The northern variant turns west from Bridger Butte, passes Bigelow Springs, descends Bigelow Bench and crosses Muddy Creek one mile north of Meyers Ridge. The trail then follows Sods Hollow southwest. The northern route splits again with an alternate following Antelope Creek west and then a tributary southeast around a dominant ridgespur while another alternate ascends the ridge and follows the crest southwest towards Aspen Mountain.

The southern variant leaves Bridger Butte and follows Cottonwood Creek to the south of Myers Ridge. This southern route crosses Little Creek and Muddy Creek in quick succession, then follows the south bank of Piedmont Creek for three miles. This variant then crosses to the north side of Piedmont Creek, and follows this drainage until

## Management Program

uniting with the north variant some 3.5 miles west. Aspen Mountain is reached about two miles further.

From Aspen Mountain, the Trail passes Altamont, follows Stowe Creek for a couple of miles, and crosses a gap in Oyster Shell Ridge to drop down to Sulphur Creek and Beartown. Here, the trail veers northwest and crosses the Bear River. The Trail then follows Stagecoach Hollow to Coyote Creek and follows the north side of this creek to a local landmark called "The Needles." The Trail passes through the narrow gap at The Needles, turns northwest, crosses Yellow Creek, and exits the state of Wyoming in the vicinity of the old Needle Rock Station.

This trail segment lies mostly on private and state land. The public lands along this segment are found in scattered parcels only. The longest segment of trail on public lands is just over a mile long. A total of approximately 10 miles of Mormon- California trail is found on public lands in this segment.

### Management of Sites

Three interpretive signs should be planned for this trail segment. The first will be placed on public land between Bridger Butte and Bigelow Ditch and will identify the nearby trail as the Mormon- California Trail; not the Oregon Trail. The second will be located near Piedmont and will describe the various historic sites in the Area (Aspen Tunnel, stage stations, Brigham Young's Well, etc.). A final site will be put near The Needles, a local landmark near Needle Rock Stage Station and the present-day Wyoming-Utah State line. This sign will describe the trail in the vicinity, Bear River crossing, etc.

### Management of Trail Segments

This segment of trail will be managed under the Oregon/Mormon Trail General Management Policy.

### Management Policy

No specific management policy is necessary for this segment. Two parcels of public land that include the north and south Needles will be retained in their existing condition in federal ownership.

## Seminole Cutoff -SC (Rawlins District)

The Seminole Cutoff is located south of the Sweetwater River, beginning southeast of Sweetwater Station and ending at Burnt Ranch. A variant of the Seminole Cutoff continues west and rejoins the primary route of the Oregon Trail near Twin Mounds. The Seminole Cutoff had the advantage of avoiding the last four crossings of the Sweetwater River.

### Management of Sites

Site SC-9 Seminole Cutoff Parting (also mentioned in Sweetwater/South Pass Segment). The BLM will install an interpretive sign, identifying the Parting of the Seminole Cutoff with the primary Oregon/Mormon Trail route.

### Management of Trail Segments

The Seminole Cutoff will be managed as a trekking route. The BLM will make no special effort to advertise that fact, but will implement measures to ensure public access along its length from near Sweetwater Station to near South Pass.

To accomplish this, the BLM will attempt to acquire public access across state and private lands along the cutoff and to retain existing easements previously acquired by the BLM.

The BLM will retain the following public easements across private lands:

### Sixth Principal Meridian, Wyoming

T. 28 N., R. 98 W.,  
sec. 19, SW1/4SE1/2;  
sec. 30, N1/2NE1/4. T. 28 N., R. 99 W.,  
sec. 23, E1/2NE1/4; sec. 24, W1/2.

The BLM will attempt to acquire easements across state and private lands. Normal easements would be roughly 50 to 80 feet on either side of the trail center line. The exact width would be negotiated.

Easements would be needed across the following private lands:

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### Sixth Principal Meridian, Wyoming

T. 29 N., R. 95 W.,  
sec. 15.

T. 29 N., R. 96 W.,  
sec. 25.

T. 27 N., R. 100 W.,  
sec. 3; sec. 4.

Easements would be needed across the following state lands:

### Sixth Principal Meridian, Wyoming

T. 28 N., R. 97 W.,  
sec. 14;  
sec. 15.

T. 28 N., R. 98 W.,  
sec. 24.

T. 28 N., R. 100 W.,  
sec. 36.

T. 29 N., R. 95 W.,  
sec. 16.

Should the BLM or other public agencies acquire the private lands at Burnt Ranch (Sec. 26, T. 28 N., R. 100 W.), the public trekking route would lead to Burnt Ranch, then west on the primary route of the Oregon/Mormon Trails.

The trekking route will not be improved, graded, drained, or repaired with mechanical equipment to facilitate motor vehicle use except where it has previously been improved by such means.

The Seminoe Cutoff should be included in a protective corridor as outlined in the Oregon/ Mormon Trail General Management Policy.

The Seminoe Cutoff should be included in the Oregon/Mormon Trail brochure or the BLM should develop a separate map/brochure for this cutoff.

The Seminoe Cutoff will be marked with 6"x6"x6' wooden sign posts. One side of the post will say Oregon Trail, a second will say Seminoe Cutoff.

### Management Policy

The Seminoe Cutoff will be managed according to the guidelines in the Oregon/Mormon Trail General Management Policy. No specific policies are needed for the Seminoe Cutoff.

### Lander Road -LR (Cutoff) (Rawlins/ Rock Springs District)

The Lander Road is unique among the major emigrant routes in Wyoming in that it was the only federally subsidized emigrant wagon road project of the area. The Lander Road was designed to provide a route of travel with abundant grass, water, and timber resources generally scarce along the routes to the south.

The Lander Road diverges from the main route of the Oregon Trail at Burnt Ranch, the site of the final crossing of the Sweetwater River. The road heads northwest, then west, across gently rolling upland, in the process crossing several small creeks. Approaching the Sweetwater, the route enters an area of broken topography and then makes a steep descent to cross the river. Turning northwest, the trail crosses to the west bank of Lander Creek and parallels this creek nearly to its headwaters at the Continental Divide. The road crosses the Divide in a low spot between Lander Creek and the Little Sandy River, crosses the Little Sandy, and then runs northwest across upland to the Big Sandy River. After paralleling the south side of the Big Sandy for several miles, the Trail crosses the river at Buckskin Crossing.

After the Buckskin Crossing of the Big Sandy, the Lander Road runs straight northwest for some seven miles across the flats of South Muddy Creek. At the crossing of the Speedway Road, it then turns west and begins a ten mile stretch to Alkalai Creek. The route follows the Alkalai Creek or a tributary for a number of miles, then veers slightly southwest to cross the New Fork River. From the crossing of the New Fork River, it ascends the southern portion of "The Mesa," and travels about 5.5 miles to the Green River crossing. It then crosses the Green River in a broad valley at a relatively shallow location. Here, the river could be forded and no ferry was utilized.

West of the Green River, the road ascends an intermittent drainage and runs generally west-southwesterly to cross Muddy Creek about two miles north of Marbleton. From here to a dominant butte on the south side of North Pine Creek, it traverses Meadow Canyon Swale, and crosses North Piney Creek on the southeast side of the butte. Then, it trends southwesterly across the Ruben Oil Field, passing south of Deer Hill and Sand Hill, and crosses Middle Piney Creek. Trending west-southwesterly, the road then

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Crosses Fish Creek .5 mile north of its junction with South Piney Creek, and enters the South Piney Creek valley. The road then follows South Piney Creek upstream, where it enters the Bridger National Forest between Riley Ridge and North Mountain.

### Management of Sites

**Site LR-1 Highway 28 Crossing.** This highway interpretive sign, developed cooperatively by the BLM and the Sublette County Historical Society, should be maintained and managed as at present. The interpretive sign should be repaired and painted routinely to prevent deterioration.

**Site LR-2 Buckskin Crossing.** The BLM and the Sublette Historical Society will cooperatively maintain the existing interpretive sign at Buckskin Crossing. No additional development is warranted. The sign should receive regular maintenance.

The BLM will pursue an agreement with the landowner in the Buckskin Crossing area to continue to allow limited public access to the trail.

**Site LR-3 Historical Monuments.** These monuments, located on public lands in Secs. 2 and 12, T. 30 N., R. 106 W., should be maintained in their present condition. No additional development at these monument locations is warranted at this time.

**Site LR-4 New Fork Crossing.** The BLM will install an interpretive sign at the point where the Lander Cutoff crosses the New Fork River.

**Site LR-5 Green River Crossing.** An interpretive sign will be installed at the point where the Lander Cutoff crosses the Green River.

**Site LR-6 Deer Hills.** An interpretive sign will be installed adjacent to the Lander Cutoff in the Deer Hills.

### Management of Trail Segments

The guide to the Lander Road/Oregon Trail needs to be reprinted with minor modifications. The modification would include showing segments of the trail which can be driven on by motor vehicles. The guide will be used to inform the public of opportunities and limitations associated with visiting sites and traveling portions of the Lander Road. The Lander Road will remain open for travel by motor vehicles.

The BLM will develop a cooperative working agreement with the Sublette County Historical Society to coordinate marking and management of the Sublette Cutoff on public and private lands.

Conduct a trail inventory of the Lander Road to determine the location existence and significance of sites and trail segments along the Lander Road. These inventory data will be used to refine management actions in the future.

### Management Policy

No specific management policy will be developed exclusively for the Lander Road. This road will be managed according to the guidelines in the Oregon/Mormon Trail General Management Policy.

### Sublette Cutoff -SU (Rock Springs District)

The most popular and heavily used emigrant cutoff was the Sublette (sometimes called the Greenwood). This cutoff was originally blazed and used by William Sublette in 1832 as a direct route to move his supply wagons to the Snake River country for the fur trappers rendezvous. Emigrant use of the cutoff began in 1844 as an alternative to traveling the traditional Oregon Trail that dipped far south of the Sublette to utilize Fort Bridger. The popularity of the cutoff grew as the California Gold Rush drew thousands of pioneers west to seek their fortunes. By using the cutoff, the 4gers were able to shave five to seven days from the arduous way west.

The Cutoffs popularity continued through the 1850s; however, as the gold petered out in California, so did the heavy emigrant travel across the Sublette Cutoff. By 1869, the transcontinental railroad was completed and a gradual shift from covered wagons to railroad travel occurred. Nonetheless, wagons continued to roll across the Sublette Cutoff to California and Oregon until after 1900. The last known covered wagon to traverse the Sublette was in 1912.

The Sublette Cutoff extends from Parting-of-the-Ways in north-central Sweetwater County to the town of Cokeville in western Lincoln County. It crosses the Big Sandy north of the town of Farson and heads west near the north boundary

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of Sweetwater County to the Green River. It crosses the Green River north of Fontenelle Reservoir and heads southwest into Lincoln County. The trail crosses the Hams Fork and turns northwest, crossing the Hams Fork Plateau north of Fossil Butte National Monument and rejoins the primary route of the Oregon Trail at Cokeville.

### Management of Sites

**Site SU-1 Lucinda (Linda) B. Wright Grave.** The grave should be marked with a small, low profile BLM sign. The sign would identify the grave as an 1853 emigrant gravesite and, as such, would contribute to its protection. The site will be monitored annually. Additional management measures are not warranted at present.

**Site SU-2 Green River Crossings.** An interpretive sign should be erected at the mouth of Steed Canyon, the point where the original route of the Sublette Cutoff crosses the Green River. This was a major ford/ferry site and is located on BLM- administered public land. Two other ferries are documented but are on private land or destroyed by modern structures. The proposed site for the interpretive sign retains good integrity of setting although an improved oil field road runs across the canyon mouth. The road also provides convenient access to the site.

About 500 feet north of the ferry site, dozens of emigrants inscribed their names and dates of passage onto the sandstone cliffs bordering the river. Natural erosion continues to erase many of the inscriptions but vandalism is not a problem at present. The inscriptions should be scientifically recorded prior to placing the interpretive sign. The sign should be placed off the west side of the oil field road so that visitors look directly west down the trail route across the river when viewing it.

The site should also be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

**Site SU-3 Holden Hill.** Holden Hill is a narrow canyon between the Green River and Fontenelle Creek. It was used by emigrants to record names and points of origin on the canyon walls. Shows no evidence of vandalism. This pristine historic site needs protection to ensure that it is not damaged or vandalized in any way. To adequately protect it, the lands within a protective corridor around the trail should be withdrawn from mineral entry. The trail ruts will be closed to all ORV use. No recreational development will be done at the site and public access will not be acquired. Efforts will be made to stabilize some of the sandstone cliffs which are deteriorating. The site will be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

**Site SU-4 The Pine Grove.** A trailside interpretive sign should be installed to identify the site and describe its importance as an emigrant campsite. This historic emigrant campsite should be placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Site SU-5 Rocky Gap.** A trail side interpretive sign should be installed at this point to identify Rocky Gap and to mark the beginning of Dempsey-Hockaday Cutoff.

**Site SU-6 White Hill.** An interpretive sign should identify this as the site of an Indian massacre and wagon burning.

**Site SU-7 Nancy Hill and Alfred Corum Gravesites.** The Hill and Corum Gravesites are located on Hams Fork Plateau in a fenced area with a number of other graves. Both the death and grave of these individuals are well documented. The Alfred Corum grave should have an interpretive sign installed. The Nancy Hill gravesite should be managed as at present, with the interpretive sign and fence. Fencing of either gravesite should be commensurate with the needs; if a chain link fence is needed to protect the site and prevent vandalism of the grave, that should be installed. These sites should be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

### Site SU-8 Emigrant Spring (Dempsey Ridge).

Emigrant Spring was an important camping place near the point of merger of the Slate Creek Cutoff with the Sublette Cutoff. Several emigrant graves and a stone marker are located there. The existing sign should be retained, telling of the significance of the site and identifying it as an important campsite. The site should be considered for location of picnic facilities. Prior to development, the site should be adequately surveyed and recorded. This site should be examined for possible nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

### Management of Trail Segments

**Segment 1, Westfall Hollow Segment.** The Westfall Hollow Segment is proposed for formal road closure because of the .5 mile of pristine ruts found there. The western end is formed by the right-of-way fence of State Highway 233 (the Hams Fork road) and is not now conducive to vehicle passage due to a combination of right-of-way fences and a large stock pond. In other

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words, the western end of the *Westfall* Hollow segment is "naturally closed" to vehicles. The pristine trail ruts include a frequently dense stand of mature big sagebrush that makes vehicle passage nearly impossible. Vehicle passage becomes more feasible at the eastern edge of the segment but then a drainage has cut a 10-foot deep arroyo into the present ground surface. Thus, both ends of the .5-mile segment containing pristine ruts contain natural vehicle passage inhibitors and a formal road closure here should present no undue hardship to the public.

**Segment 2, The Rock Slide Segment.** The Rock Slide segment of the Sublette Cutoff is located on the Hams Fork Plateau, northwest of the Emigrant Springs campsite in Secs. 21, 28, and 29, T. 23 N., R. 118 W. (public land). Gardner (1983, pp. 22 thru 2S) provides a good description of the Rock Slide and the descent/ascent of the Rock Creek drainage. The steepness of the descent drew comments from several emigrants and resulted in establishing a northern variant that bypassed the Rock Slide. The descent to Rock Creek near the rock slide today represents a unique, isolated, pristine trail segment worthy of special protective measures. A formal road closure is proposed. The trail route in the vicinity of the rock slide is virtually impassable with 4x4 vehicles and the trail is naturally closed to vehicle passage. Access to public lands will not be affected by the road closure so negative public comment is not expected.

**Segment 3, Fontenelle Creek to Rocky Gap.** This trail segment is recommended for 4x4 travel only due to rugged terrain. Vehicle travel should be limited to existing vehicle routes.

**Segment 4, Rocky Gap to Hams Fork.** This trail segment is recommended for 4x4 travel. The Westfall Hollow portion is closed to ORV use (see Segment 1, Westfall Hollow Segment). Travel is limited to existing vehicle routes.

**Segment 5, Hams Fork Plateau.** This portion of the Sublette Cutoff is accessible by 2-wheel drive vehicle. Visitor use of the segment is encouraged. High ground clearance vehicles are recommended. The Rock Slide portion is closed to ORV use (see Segment 2, The Rock Slide Segment). Travel will be limited to existing vehicle routes.

## Management Policy

The BLM will develop and distribute a trail user brochure for the Trail's Sublette Cutoff. It will be designed to be used by persons and groups interested in touring the trail and by industrial firms working in the area. For additional

information, refer to the Oregon/Mormon Trail General Management Policy.

It will be the policy of the Rock Springs District that the Sublette Cutoff will be available for recreational use including vehicle driving, foot travel and horseback travel, except for the segments designated closed to ORV use. Those segments will be available for foot or horseback travel only.

## Kinney Cutoff -KC (Rock Springs District)

The Kinney Cutoff was a short segment of trail, approximately 20 miles in length, running from the primary route of the Oregon/Mormon Trails to the Slate Creek Cutoff just south of Fontenelle Reservoir on the Green River. All historical sources agree that the Kinney Cutoff runs along the banks of the Green River, but problems arise in attempting to define a single exact route.

Many trail authorities and a number of diaries indicate that the Kinney diverges from the Oregon Trail at a point one to three miles east of Lombard Ferry, travels west over dissected terrain to the east bank of the Green. It continues northwest along the east bank, traversing relatively flat terraces for about 10 miles. The route then pulls away from the river, skirting low hills prior to converging with the Slate Creek Cutoff at the Case-Davis crossing of the Green River.

## Management of Sites

No historic sites have been identified along the Kinney Cutoff.

## Management of Trail Segments

No complete on-the-ground reconnaissance of the various routes of the Kinney Cutoff has been conducted, so the location of all significant trail remains has not been determined. Such a survey should be initiated as soon as possible.

An interpretive sign should be placed near the intersection of the lower Farson Cutoff county road. The sign would interpret the general route and function of the Kinney Cutoff. The exact location of the sign should be selected to maximize viewscape. The sign should interpret the historical significance of the cutoff and should mention the historic ferry sites to the west and south. The sign should also mention the Dodge

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Suspension Bridge, a structure that was built at the historic ferry site in the early twentieth century and that was of great importance to the local ranching industry.

Should public demand for trekking on the Kinney Cutoff materialize in the future, the BLM will seek public access agreements along one or more of the route variants. The route can be approximately retraced on the east side of the Green River along the Farson Cutoff road and along the west side of the Green River along State Highway 372.

### Management Policy

No specific management policy will be developed for the Kinney Cutoff. This route will be managed according to the guidelines in the Oregon/Mormon Trail General Management Policy.

### Slate Creek Cutoff -SL (Rock Springs District)

The Slate Creek Cutoff was developed around 1852 in response to the need for a route that would avoid the dry and dangerous Sublette Cutoff that crossed the Little Colorado Desert, yet which would shorten the route to Oregon by bypassing the loop to Fort Bridger. The Slate Creek trail left the Bridger Route of the Oregon Trail several miles west of what was to become the Big Sandy Stage Station. It proceeded north of the Blue Forest and dropped down to the Green River at Robinson's Ferry near present day Fontenelle. It then meandered along Slate Creek until it joined the Sublette Cutoff near Emigrant Springs. While this route would have been a day or so longer than the Sublette Cutoff, it would save several days over the Bridger Route. Between its division with the Bridger Route and its arrival at the Green River, the Slate Creek is 20 miles long.

The Slate Creek Cutoff diverges from the main (Fort Bridger) route of the Oregon Trail west of the Big Bend of the Big Sandy; this location is about a mile west of both the Big Timber Pony Express Station and the point where the Oregon Trail alternate forks south to cross the Sandy. The Slate Creek Cutoff heads northwest across flat, brush covered plains dotted with dry lake beds. Continuing in this direction, the trail crosses fields of sand dunes and areas of low badlands, finally turning straight west and heading between high badland buttes. Still proceeding west, the final miles to the Green are characterized by gently rolling to flat topography. The cutoff crosses the Green at a point just downstream from modern Fontenelle Dam. The entire route from the Big Bend to the Green lacks topographic obstacles, steep grades, and permanent water of any type.

From the Green River crossing, the trail proceeds west, passing just north of Slate Creek Butte, and follows the south side of Slate Creek proper. About 10.5 miles west of the Green, the trail crosses over to the north side of Slate Creek, and begins to follow the high sandstone bluffs west, rather than the drainage bottom. After an additional eight miles, the trail veers northwest and drops down to a dry tributary of Emigrant Creek to Emigrant Springs, a major emigrant camp along the Slate Creek Trail. From Emigrant Spring, the trail follows Emigrant Creek for 1.5 miles, and trends northwest to begin the ascent of Slate Creek Ridge. From an altitude of 7,060 feet at Emigrant Spring, the trail ascends to 7,832 feet above sea level, with a rise of about 400 feet per mile. The trail descends from the ridge, crosses the North Fork of Slate Creek (at 7,400 feet) and proceeds west northwest for 1.5 miles and unites with the Sublette Cutoff at Rocky Gap. Rocky Gap is recognized as the western terminus of the Slate Creek Trail.

### Management of Sites

**Site SL-1 Parting with Main Trail.** The BLM will place an interpretive sign at the parting of the Slate Creek Cutoff with the main route of the Oregon/ Mormon Trail. It will identify the site as the parting of the two routes and interpret the significance of the cutoff.

**Site SL-2 Case-Davis Ferry Site.** The Case-Davis Ferry site is on public land administered by the Bureau of Reclamation. No management actions are envisioned at this time. Future actions may involve BLM management through transfer of management responsibility from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to the BLM.

**Site SL-3 Emigrant Spring (Slate Creek).** A portion of this site lies on a 40-acre private parcel of land. The landowner has expressed a desire to have his portion of the emigrant inscription site in federal ownership and protective status. We propose to acquire the tract (SWV4NW1/4 Sec. 13, T. 23 N., R. 115 W.) through land exchange for a yet to be identified parcel of public land.

The inscriptions at Emigrant Spring have been deteriorating at an accelerated rate over the past 10 to 20 years. We propose to implement measures to stabilize the sandstone cliff face and lessen the

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rate of erosion. Chemical treatments may be available which would help stabilize the sandstone.

The existing inscriptions should be recorded so that the information is not lost.

The BLM will install an interpretive sign at the site to explain the significance of the site.  
The site can be developed as a recreation site/ visitor area. The development will be done in an attempt to protect the site, as well as make it available for use. Facilities will include parking and signing. Constructed shelters over the inscriptions will be considered. Recreation facilities such as picnic tables will not be included in the development. An emigrant grave threatened by arroyo-cutting will be stabilized.

The Emigrant Spring site should be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

**Site SL-4 Johnston Scout Rocks.** The Johnston Scout Rocks are a large sandstone block on which are carved the name "T.C. Johnston L.A. Cary 1860 Scouts" and other emigrant names over a period of 38 years. The BLM will implement measures to stabilize the sandstone face of the rocks. Chemical treatments may be available to help stabilize the rocks.

The existing inscriptions should be recorded so that the information on the rocks is not lost. The BLM will install protective fencing with a locked gate around the rocks. The Johnston Scout Rocks site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. An interpretive sign will be installed at the site.

**Site SL-5 Terminus of Slate Creek Cutoff.** The terminus will be marked with a trail marker.

Management of Trail Segments

Field inventories will be utilized to locate other significant sites and segments (variations of the main Slate Creek Cutoff). If they are located, they will be recorded so that information they contain will not be lost. Appropriate protective measures will be utilized. as needed.

Management Policy

This cutoff will be managed under the Oregon/ Mormon Trail General Management Policy. No additional specific policies are needed for this segment.

Dempsey-Hockaday Cutoff -DH (Rock Springs District)

The Dempsey-Hockaday Cutoff diverges from the Sublette Trail at Rocky Gap near the present day abandoned Jamison Ranch. From here, the trail crosses Pomeroy Basin, with two variants ascending Commissary Ridge up Wheat Creek and West Willow/Sheep Dip Creeks, respectively. The trail then follows the uplands above Trail Creek and crosses Hams Fork just north of present day Lake Viva-Naughton (this route is still a favored crossing of Hams Fork used by hunters and recreationists today). The trail then crosses Dempsey Basin adjacent to the South Fork Creek, and reunites with the Sublette Creek at the base of Dempsey Ridge. Approximately eight miles of this trail segment are on public land.

Management of Sites

No documented historic sites are found on this cutoff.

Management of Trail Segments

A road closure is proposed for a portion of the Dempsey-Hockaday Cutoff on Commissary Ridge. Specifically, we propose to close vehicle passage on the trail in portions of Secs. 33, 34, T. 24 N., R. 116 W. and portions of Secs. 3 and 4, T. 23 N., R. 116 W. Several ascents of Commissary Ridge from Pomeroy Basin and Rocky Gap to the east are located here. Pristine trail ruts, superior integrity of setting, and an excellent historical association combine to make the trail in this area worthy of preservation. This, coupled with the fragility of the soil in the area and moderate use of the trail by hunters in the fall (when the ground is frequently muddy and fragile), lead us to recommend vehicle closure in this area. Some negative public comment from hunters is expected on this proposal.

Three signs, possibly four, multifunctional in nature, are proposed along the Dempsey- Hockaday Trail. The first will be located at or near Rocky Gap and will identify the juncture of Slate Creek Trail with the Sublette Cutoff; and the divergence of the Dempsey-Hockaday Cutoff with the Sublette Trail. A second sign will be placed on top of Commissary Ridge where some excellent ruts are found and where knolls command a panoramic and beautiful vista of the upper Hams Fork Valley, the Commissary Ridge system. and



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Pomeroy Basin. The third sign is planned for the Hams Fork Plateau where the Dempsey-Hockaday Trail reunites with the Sublette Cutoff and will address both trails. A fourth sign, optional, may be placed along the trail where it intersects with the Hams Fork Road, just north of Lake Viva-Naughton. This sign would interpret the Dempsey-Hockaday Trail across Hams Fork.

### Management Policy

A management policy specific to the Dempsey-Hockaday Cutoff is not necessary.

### Blacks Fork Cutoff -BF (Rock Springs District)

According to the 7.5' USGS topographic maps in the Kemmerer Resource Area, the Blacks Fork Cutoff begins at the union of the Hams Fork and Blacks Fork Rivers just west of Granger. The Blacks Fork Cutoff proceeds west, generally following the bluffs overlooking the Blacks Fork to the north. A 2-track road, located using the 1874 General Land Office plat for T. 19 N., R. 112 W., was identified in Sec. 28 as the probable trail and lies some 4.5 miles west of Granger.

The Blacks Fork River turns to the south 12 miles west of Granger. The cutoff abandons this river and follows the Little Muddy Creek. One variant of the trail, verified using the 1874 GLO plat for T. 18 N., R. 115 W., generally follows the north side of the Little Muddy while another variant is located along the southern bank of this creek for about five miles. Both variants unite four miles northwest of Hampton siding on the Union Pacific Railroad, and follow the north side of the Little Muddy for an additional seven miles to a point north of the Carter Cedars where the Bridger Route of the Oregon Trail joins the Blacks Fork Cutoff. Both trails follow the Little Muddy, with the Blacks Fork Cutoff on the north and the Bridger Route of the Oregon Trail on the south bank, respectively. Four miles distant, the Blacks Fork Cutoff crosses the Little Muddy and merges with the Oregon Trail just east of the Ziller Ranch, one mile east of Cumberland Gap.

### Management of Sites

No documented historic sites are presently known to exist on public lands along this cutoff.

### Management of Trail Segments

The BLM will place an interpretive sign at the end of the Blacks Fork Cutoff just east of the Ziller Ranch. This sign will mark the junction of the Blacks Fork Cutoff with the main route of the Oregon Trail. Due to the rough terrain, four-wheel drive vehicle use only is recommended.

Because little is presently known of the condition of the Blacks Fork Cutoff, archival and field research are needed to fill in this data gap. Field examination and other research could be done cooperatively by the BLM and other groups such as universities, historical societies, or historical associations. This work should be done as soon as practical.

### Management Policy

The Blacks Fork Cutoff will be managed according to the Oregon/Mormon Trail General Management Policy.

## MAINTENANCE

Maintenance work will be done by BLM. It will be accomplished by BLM personnel, by BLM contracts with private organizations and individuals, local agencies and through cooperative management agreements (CMAs) with other federal agencies (NPS), historical societies, or other interested groups.

Maintenance work will be programmed annually by BLM district offices.

The contracted work will be for the cleanup and light maintenance of the developed historic sites such as Bessemer Bend and Devil's Gate. Cooperative agreements will be developed as opportunities presented themselves for a variety of maintenance actions. They include sign maintenance, cleanup work along trail segments, or light maintenance of developed sites.

The BLM work will include all of the above, as needed.

It is not possible to accurately estimate maintenance needs. The following are rough estimates based on past experience.

# Management Program

## Annual Maintenance Contracts

Contracts	Estimated Cost/Year
7 developed sites – haul garbage, clean up litter	\$20,000
Pump vault toilets – 2 toilets, once each year	\$500

BLM Maintenance Actions -Performed annually by BLM personnel.

Patrol trail segments, clean litter, repair signs and trail markers. This would require patrolling nearly 500 miles of trail in three BLM districts. If signs or markers were found damaged, they would be removed; requisitions for new signs would be submitted. The signs would be replaced the same year.

Cooperative agreements could be entered into with county historical societies. etc. They would for example, take responsibility for a segment of trail. They would replace signs or clean sites, using materials supplied by the BLM.

## ADMINISTRATION

### Work Month Costs/Year

Responsible Resource Area	Workmonths
Platte River Resource Area	2
Lander Resource	2
Big Sandy Resource Area	2
Kemmerer Resource Area	2
Pinedale Resource Area	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>

The above work months would be used for monitoring trail use, handling use permits, use supervision, handling public contacts, and performing light maintenance.

## Planning and Coordination

Responsible District	Workmonths
Rawlins District	2
Rock Springs District	2
Casper District	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>

The above work months would be used for management planning updates, project planning (site development, maintenance), and coordination of trail management with the BLM State Office, the three districts, the State of Wyoming, and private groups and organizations.

## Maintenance

Assignment	Workmonths
Develop & monitor maintenance contracts	1
Maintenance signs & trail markers	3
Sign installation	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>

Total workmonth cost/year 22

These 22 workmonths would be allocated to a seasonal employee in each of the three BLM districts, existing personnel in the respective divisions of Operations, and existing personnel in the respective divisions of Lands and Renewable Resources.